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ABSTRACT

This brief is a combination directory of contact persons and annotated bibliography designed to provide information on developing and implementing basic skills training programs for workers in the health care industry. The first section contains information on 33 contact persons currently operating employee basic skills programs for health care workers, working on patients' literacy needs, providing technical assistance in the area of basic skills training, researching the impact of employee basic skills on health care, or operating grant programs in support of health care projects. Each profile contains the contact person's current title and address along with a brief summary of the program. The second part of the brief is an annotated bibliography of 16 publications. The publications cited deal with various aspects of basic skills and literacy training for health care workers and patient education, including the following: workplace literacy, teaching and learning English as a Second Language, teaching patients with low literacy skills, women's health, the health status of illiterate adults, communicating with non-English-speaking patients, and cultural diversity. A publisher of health care materials for adults with limited reading abilities is also listed. (MN)

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Brief

Workforce & Workplace Literacy
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Basic Skills & The Health Care Industry

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Introduction

Health care is one of the nation's fastest growing industries. Many pressures on the industry make employee skills upgrading a necessity, especially for support personnel. Among these pressures are the changing health care needs of the aging American population; the increasing need for health care personnel to communicate clearly with patients (a growing and disproportionate number of people seeking medical care have limited basic skills and limited English-speaking ability); technological advances in treatment; heavy reliance on recent immigrants, low-skilled minorities (increasingly, minority youth), and other educationally-disadvantaged groups in support and entry-level jobs (especially in nursing homes); time lost by managers and supervisors who must watch for support personnel mistakes; and high support staff turnover. [Note: Nurses aides, dietary staff, and other lower level workers have historically been paid low wages, thus contributing to the turnover rate.] Moreover, while rising costs and an increased emphasis on self care are in general reducing the length of hospital stays, many patients remaining for longer periods of time often require specialized attention, thus requiring more highly trained staff.

To an important degree, the quality of care depends heavily on the ability of support and entry-level staff—nursing aides, dietary aides, housekeeping and maintenance workers, and others—to perform their jobs well. These people must be able to communicate clearly with patients and to carry out instructions for administering medications and following nurses' orders and doctors' treatment plans. They must be able to operate new equipment and interpret the findings, follow strict measurements regarding patients' diets, know what procedures to follow in case of emergency, handle the day-to-day maintenance of their institutions, and so on—all requiring solid basic skills.

Other pressures on the health care industry are external, giving the industry reason to be concerned about the ability of patients and the general population to practice preventive and home health care. The volume of health-related information that Americans must now sift through and understand is enormous—stemming in part from new health hazards in the workplace (e.g. toxic substances), new health disorders such as AIDS and drug abuse, and new medications and health services available. Awareness of these issues is growing within the industry, and already many hospitals, nursing homes, and allied groups have begun to offer employee basic skills services and to train higher-level personnel in strategies and techniques for working with low-skilled workers. A number of initiatives are also in process to address the basic skills needs of patients.

National health care associations can provide significant leadership and technical assistance but most have not yet become seriously involved in literacy. However, there are some notable excep-

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tions. The American Hospital Association, together with the American Society for Healthcare Human Resources, has begun a major long-term campaign. Specific disease-oriented groups, like the National Cancer Institute and the National Heart, Lung & Blood Institute, are beginning to develop easy-to-read health promotion and patient information materials. The American Optometric Association has also undertaken a special literacy project.

Contacts

The following people are operating employee basic skills programs for health care workers...working on the literacy needs of patients...providing significant technical assistance...researching the impact of employee basic skills on health care...or operating grant programs in support of health care projects.

1. **Beverly Rogers, Director, Human Resource Administration, American Hospital Association**, 840 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60611, (312) 280-3556. After a year of study by its literacy task force, the American Hospital Association is working to encourage the CEOs of its 5,500 member hospitals and related professional and educational organizations to develop workplace skills programs for their employees. In 1990 it published *Literacy in the Workplace: You Can't Afford Not to Care* (see #1 under References), a booklet of challenges and guidelines for members. Rogers has since continued to collect data on AHA projects related to employee basic skills in the health care industry.

2. **Katherine Carroll-Day, Director of Special Programs, Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training**, 19 Staniford Street - 4th Floor, Boston, MA 02114, (617) 727-6480. Ms. Carroll-Day represents the Department in the state's workplace education initiative, which includes several adult literacy projects in the health care field.

3. **Lloyd David, President, Continuing Education Institute**, 35 Highland Circle, Needham, MA 02194, (617) 449-4802. CEI has been conducting skills upgrading programs at health care facilities in the Boston area for a number of years. In 1991, with a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, it established a training collaborative with three public hospitals and four private nursing homes. The effort provided on-site ABE, ESL, and math instruction to nursing assistants and dietary and housekeeping workers as well as a course leading to a high school diploma. CEI developed the workplace-related curriculum and provided the instructors. Even though the DOE funding has ended, CEI is continuing its Adult Diploma Program (ADP) with six of the partners and two additional hospitals (with the help of a community development block grant from the City of Boston). The ADP is unique in that it requires the adult learner to demonstrate skills and knowledge learned from a job or other life experiences and to receive high school credit for those experiences. Each person must enroll in an employment workshop which analyzes such things as problem solving skills, interpersonal relation skills, communication skills, information gathering and reporting skills, technical skills, etc. in the context of their work experience. A recent longitudinal study of 212 ADP graduates, or 54 percent of all of the graduates between 1982-91, revealed that over 50 percent had been promoted and/or taken on more job responsibility, 32 percent had taken other job-related courses at the workplace, and 38% had taken courses outside their workplace. In cooperation with the Chinese American Civic Association, CEI has also produced a publication about workplace ESL programs in nursing homes (see #2 under References).

4. **Dolores Perin, Center for Advanced Study in Education, Graduate School, City University of New York**, 25 West 43rd Street, Room 620, New York, NY 10036, (212) 642-2937. Ms. Perin managed a pilot project developed by CUNY and the Consortium for Worker Education in which union health care workers (primarily in the 40-50 age group) with basic skills deficiencies were being prepared for college study. The project, funded with a U.S. Department of Education grant, was completed in late 1991, but the resultant program continues to be offered by the Consortium. A preliminary follow-up of participants during the pilot phase revealed that 62 of the 99 enrollees were accepted into regular health care programs at CUNY. The project also produced a published curriculum, *College Preparation for Health Care Workers*, for national use (see References #3).

5. **Leonard and Cecilia Doak, Patient Learning Associates**, 4 Chilton Court, Potomac, MD 20854, (301) 340-9894. This group is a health education consulting firm which gives workshops and training to health care personnel and adult educators on how to communicate with adults having low literacy skills. Cecilia and Leonard Doak, together with Jane Root, in 1985 wrote *Teaching Patients with Low Literacy Skills* (see #4 under References). Another book, also geared to helping patients understand, is scheduled for publication in late 1993.

6. **Karen Donato, Coordinator, Nutrition Education and Special Initiatives, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute**, National Institutes of Health, 9000 Rockville Pike, Building 31, Room 4A-18, Bethesda, MD 20892, (301) 496-1051. The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute has launched an effort to produce public health materials written at a readability level suitable for low-skilled adults. As a first step, in 1991 it published a booklet on cholesterol and dietary change written at the 5th-grade level, which was well received in the health care community. A second booklet, developed for people with limited reading skills whohave high blood pressure, has just recently been released. The Institute has widely disseminated the publications through state health departments, clinics, HMOs, neighborhood health centers, and professional associations. Single copies or bulk quantities of both booklets can also be ordered (see #5 under References).

7. **Marguerite Evans, Project Officer, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute**, 7500 Wisconsin Avenue, Room 604, Bethesda, MD 20892, (301) 496-2465. On a related front (to #6 above), the Institute has awarded grants totaling $7.5 million to four universities to create low-literacy nutrition education materials designed to reduce cardiovascular risk factors. (The grantees were Stanford Center for Research, Penn State University, the University of Minnesota, and the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill; the grant periods range from three to five years.) The publications will be tested with low-literate adults in nutrition education classes and clinical settings to determine if they result in concrete changes, such as lowered serum cholesterol levels or weight loss. Once the materials are shown to be effective, the funded institutions will also develop methods for disseminating them nationally. In addition, the Institute will use the project results to inform and enhance its own creation of materials for low-literacy adults.

8. **Sara Betterton, Staff Development Coordinator, Kaweah Delta District Hospital**, 400 West Mineral King, Visalia, CA 93291-6263, (209) 625-2211. In late 1991, the Kaweah Delta District Hospital began a workplace literacy program. Employees who volunteer to be tutors are trained in the Laubach method at the nearby Visalia Adult School and then matched on a one-to-one basis with fellow workers who have requested help with their reading and writing. One-hour sessions are held twice a week on paid released time. To date, students have come primarily from the maintenance and housekeeping staffs. The hospital hopes that the program will grow in size as positive news about it spreads.

9. **Lois Ann Porter, Director, Project ProTech, Boston Private Industry Council**, 2 Oliver Street, Boston, MA 02109, (617) 423-3755. In September 1990, the U.S. Department of Labor granted $975,000 to the Boston Private Industry Council for development of a new four-year apprenticeship program for students pursuing careers in health care. In this program, the last two years of high school, the first two years of community college, and part-time work in a hospital are linked in an integrated, continuous program. Trainees who move through the program successfully earn an Associate degree or certification in a specific area. ProTech is now in its second year of operation, with 120 students (almost 80 percent of whom are minorities) from three Boston high schools attending health care courses and taking part in clinical rotations at one of the seven participating hospitals. (A similarly structured program, aimed at preparing students for high demand occupational areas in the financial services industry, is scheduled for implementation in September 1993.)

10. **Sue Plimpton, Manager, Literacy & Health Promotion Project, Area Health Education Center Program (AHEC), University of New England**, Hills Beach Road, Biddeford, ME 04005-9599, (207) 283-0171, ext. 205. In Maine, health care professionals have articulated the need for

easier-to-read health materials not only for low-literate patients but also for general patient use. To respond to that need, the AHEC Program initiated a "Literacy and Health Promotion Project" in 1990. As a part of its activities, the Project has formed a statewide consortium of major health agencies and adult education and literacy experts to work together in designing and producing new easy-to-read materials. To date AHEC has published 50 pamphlets that have been designed for easy photocopying to encourage wide dissemination. A "marketing brochure," available from the AHEC Program at the address shown above, lists pamphlet titles and prices for sample and/or master copies. All 50 masters sell for $22.50. In 1993, AHEC will also be conducting its second annual summer institute, "Low Literacy Communication Skills for Health Professionals." National literacy expert Jane Root will be the primary presenter at the three-day institute to be held July 18-21. Enrollment is limited to 36 participants. For more information about the institute, contact the College of Professional and Continuing Studies, University of New England, Hills Beach Road, Biddeford, Maine 04005, (207) 283-0171, ext. 122.

11. **Sarah Newcomb, Division of Adult Education & Literacy, U.S. Department of Education**, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20202-7240, (202) 205-9872. During the first three years of the Departments's ongoing National Workplace Literacy Program, some $41 million in grants has been given to business/education partnerships. As detailed in its publication, *Workplace Literacy: Reshaping the American Workforce* (see #6 under References), about 13 percent of the grants were awarded to the hospital/healthcare industry.

12. **Laura Fulton, Coordinator, Kanawha County Adult Basic Education Program**, RESA-3, Nitro/Putnam, 3942-39th Street East, Nitro, WV 25143, (304) 755-5536. Until very recently, this ABE program worked with the West Virginia Dialysis Facilities and the Charleston Renal Group to offer basic skills classes to patients at local kidney dialysis centers. The patients normally spent several hours each week being treated at the centers and often did no more than sit and watch TV. The program gave them an opportunity to study for a high school diploma while undergoing treatment.

13. **Wendy Mettger, Low Literacy Program Coordinator, Office of Cancer Communications, National Cancer Institute (NCI)**, 9000 Rockville Pike, Building 31, Room 4B-43, Bethesda, MD 20892, (301) 496-6792. The National Cancer Institute has launched an intensive effort to address the needs of low-literate audiences for cancer-related health promotion and patient education information. Most of its currently-available materials are written at a 10th-grade level or above. NCI is working with its early detection, nutrition, tobacco, patient education, minority and older American program staff to ensure that emphasis on and awareness of low-literacy issues are addressed as program themes and materials are developed. NCI's first easy-to-read pamphlet, T*he Pap Test: It Can Save Your Life*, is available now, and several more booklets are scheduled for release in summer and fall 1993 (see #7 under References). In 1992 NCI also joined forces with the AMC Cancer Research Center to set up a National Work Group on Cancer and Literacy. The group has about 25 members representing literacy, media, international health communications, health education, cancer communications, and research. The Work Group will seek to identify strategies for communicating information to people with low literacy levels, and will among other things serve as a center through which health and literacy professionals can exchange information and ideas.

14. **Aime DeGrenier, Health Careers Specialist, Education and Training Department, Brigham and Women's Hospital**, 850 Boylston Street, Suite 415, Chestnut Hill, MA 02167, (617) 732-4040. The Hospital offers its employees a range of on-site educational programs designed to help them gain self-confidence, perform their jobs better, and qualify for career advancement. Among the offerings are reading and writing skills development courses using work-based exercises and materials, *Math for Healthcare*, *English (ESL) for Healthcare* offered at six levels, a GED program, and *Project STEP-UP* designed to prepare employees with a high school diploma or GED for college entrance requirements and college-level study in a specific health care field. The courses are conducted in ten-week sessions, which meet once or twice a week for two hours, and employees are given paid released time to attend.

15. **Tori Jordan, Education and Training Specialist, Human Resources Development, Children's Hospital**, 111 Michigan Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20010, (202) 939-4665. Children's Hospital has entered into a partnership with the District of Columbia public schools to offer ABE courses to its employees. Instruction is self-paced, ranging from zero proficiency to GED level. To protect employees' confidentiality, classes are held in a Hospital-owned facility about a mile away from the worksite, and employees attend on their own time. Prince George's County Literacy Council also provides in-home tutors for some Hospital employees.

16. **Paul Taylor, Director of Human Resources Development, Greater Southeast Healthcare System**, 1310 Southern Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20032, (202) 574-6010. The Greater Southeast Community Hospital works with an instructor from the District of Columbia public school system to offer its employees on-site ABE and GED classes twice a week. The classes are also open to community residents (they must live in the District), who currently make up about one-half of the enrollees. Computer-assisted instruction and assessment, using the *Basic Academic Skills for Employment* (BASE) software program, are also available. The employees are paid for one hour of every two hours spent in class and are referred to community resources if they need more extensive help. Recognizing that many of their entry-level employees have low reading levels, the Hospital has conducted special classes to help them better understand its benefit and insurance forms. In addition, the Hospital runs a high school intern program in which students spend afternoons working in the hospital. One day a week of that program focuses on basic skills and worker preparation.

17. **Marilyn Laskowski-Sachnoff, Chair of Hotel, Restaurant & Institution Management Department and Director of Dietetic Technology, Middlesex Community College**, PO Box 3050, Edison, NJ 08818-3050, (908) 906-2538. Ms. Laskowski-Sachnoff has worked with low-literate and limited-English-speaking dietary personnel in New York City-area hospitals for many years. She has helped these workers deal with their limited skills in a variety of innovative ways—e.g. by color coding job materials, urging the employees to improve their English by speaking it on the job, and developing new training approaches in technical areas like microbiology. Even though the workers were dealing with high-tech equipment, with on-the-job training and classroom instruction (in English) they were able to master the necessary skills. Ms. Laskowski-Sachnoff presently teaches dietary personnel enrolled in community college courses, many of whom require ESL and basic skills upgrading.

18. **Paul Meyer or Stephen Bernhardt, Department of English, New Mexico State University**, Box 3E, Las Cruces, NM 88003-0001, (505) 646-1418 or (505) 646-2027. In 1990 a partnership made up of the New Mexico State University, the New Mexico Coalition for Literacy, and the Memorial Medical Center in Las Cruces received an 18-month $190,000 U.S. Department of Education grant for *Project Step Ahead*, a pilot workplace literacy program for health care workers. In 1992 the group received a second grant of $302,000 to extend the program into 18 hospitals around the state. Graduate students assist Professors Meyer and Bernhardt in developing course materials, conducting program-related research, and teaching in the program. Hospital staff are also included in the teaching team and given train-the-trainers courses with the hope that they can continue the program after the grant period ends. The project offers a range of job-related courses, including oral and written communications, communications for supervisors, and giving and receiving performance appraisals. In addition, tutoring programs, under the auspices of the Coalition, offer one-on-one and small group instruction in reading, writing, and ESL. Tutors are drawn from both the local communities and hospitals. Curriculum materials developed by Meyer and his associates during the period of the first grant are now available through the ERIC document system (see #8 under References).

19. **James Ryan, Executive Director, Training and Upgrading Fund, Philadelphia Hospital and Health Care District 1199C**, 1319 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107, (215) 735-5555. The Training and Upgrading Fund offers basic skills classes for union members aimed at helping to prepare them to enter schools of allied health in the Philadelphia

area. The classes are usually offered at the union hall or nearby union classroom facilities rather than at the worksites. The Fund is also engaged in a special initiative with the Thomas Jefferson University Hospital to help retrain its workforce. The Fund interviewed all departments at the Hospital and then developed a work-related curriculum, jointly agreed upon by the Hospital and the union, designed both to help workers do their current jobs bette. and prepare them for advancement. Twenty-two workers were recruited by the Fund, with confidentiality an uppermost consideration, and all but one successfully completed the pilot program. The Hospital paid workers for two of every five hours spent in class. Based on the pilot's promising results, the program is being expanded, and the Fund will maintain an ongoing dialogue with the Hospital regarding its training needs.

20. **Reynold Malmer, Director, Communications Center, American Optometric Association**, 243 N. Lindbergh Boulevard, St. Louis, MO 63141, (314) 991-4100. Since 1988, the AOA, which represents over 26,000 optometrists, has been encouraging its members to establish eye care programs for students in local literacy organizations. Among other activities, the AOA has published a fact sheet for local optometrists and literacy groups, called *Facts About Vision/Project Literacy U.S.* (PLUS), covering steps they can take to develop collaborative projects. It has also published *Do Vision Problems Cause Adult Reading Problems?*, a brochure to help tutors identify typical symptoms of vision difficulties in low-literacy adults. Both brochures are free of charge from the AOA Communications Center.

21. **Barry Weiss, MD, College of Medicine, Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of Arizona**, 1450 North Cherry, Tucson, AZ 85712, (602) 626-6184. Weiss carried out a research project in which a health status assessment was done of about 200 low-skilled adults in the Pima County (AZ) ABE program. The results, published in the Journal of the American Board of Family Practice (see #9 under References), indicate that there is a significant relationship between poor literacy and poor health. A second project is evaluating whether health care costs to Arizona's Medicaid-equivalent health care plan vary with the literacy levels of individual enrollees. Already the two studies suggest that the relationship between illiteracy, poor health, and increased health care costs provide "medical justification" for funding for programs to improve literacy skills.

22. **Beth Hensley, Lafayette Adult Reading Academy**, 604 North Street, Lafayette, IN 47901, (317) 742-1595. LARA, with partial funding from a U.S. Department of Education grant, developed an innovative "two-stranded" on-site program at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Lafayette. In the "top-down" strand, LARA taught administrators—who were given time off to attend specially-designed workshops—how to rewrite and simplify training manuals and hospital forms to make them more accessible to workers. In the "bottom-up" strand, LARA—again working closely with hospital staff—developed job-specific instructional programs in reading, writing, math, communication, and problem-solving for all kinds of support staff and then trained hospital supervisors to do the teaching. Some 200 support personnel—housekeepers, security guards, switchboard operators, food service employees, patient account clerks, and medical specialty aides—went through the program during the 18-month grant period. All were given paid released time. To obtain a copy of the final program report and evaluation (about 50 pages), which includes sample materials, contact Beth Hensley at LARA.

23. **Ria Papageorgiou, Training and Development Specialist, Clara Maass Medical Center**, One Franklin Avenue, Belleville, NJ 07109, (201) 450-2950. In cooperation with Union County College, the Clara Maass Medical Center runs a "Learn More/Be More" basic skills and ESL program for its employees. The program is conducted on site in 14-week cycles. All subjects are offered at two different skills levels. Employees attend class during their normal work day (paid released time for two hours a week). Program offerings will continue to be added based on ongoing needs analyses.

24. **Sandra Rosenblum, Director of Education and Training, New York State Psychiatric Institute**, 722 West 168th Street, New York, NY 10032, (212) 960-2533. The Institute operates on-site basic skills and ESL programs for employees, who attend during working hours. Job-related vocabulary and materials are integrated into the program.

Conversational Spanish and GED programs in English and Spanish are also offered on site.

25. **Nina Wallerstein, Assistant Professor, Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of New Mexico**, 2400 Tucker NE, Albuquerque, NM 87131, (505) 277-3253; and **Elsa Auerbach, Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Massachusetts**, Boston, MA 02125, (617) 287-5763 or (617) 287-6700. Professors Wallerstein and Auerbach have developed "learner-centered" curricular materials for low-literate adults. Their work is based largely on the philosophy of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, which emphasizes building learners' critical thinking skills so that they can act, make decisions, and otherwise gain control over their lives. Professor Wallerstein also works with public health issues in minority language communities in the Southwest. In 1987, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company put out *ESL for Action: Problem Posing at Work*, a student workbook and accompanying teacher's guide co-authored by Professors Wallerstein and Auerbach (see #10 under References). It takes a problem-solving approach to learning English and developing thinking skills in ESL classes and workplace programs. A major portion of the material is built around workplace safety and personal health issues.

26. **Molly Randisi, Genesee Region Home Care Association**, 49 Stone Street, Rochester, NY 14604, (716) 262-1135. The GRHC is a voluntary non-profit agency that provides home care and in-patient hospice services in a three-county region of New York State. Many of the agency's 500 employees are home care aides (counterparts of hospital nursing assistants) who have had a limited education and lack the skills needed to advance in the health care field. To address this problem, GRHC offers its employees the Life Enrichment Advancement Plan (LEAP), providing services that range from basic skills training to nursing school scholarships. Workers are told about the voluntary program at their initial orientation. The skills of those who are interested are carefully assessed to assure the placement of workers in the most appropriate program. All classes are held on company time at the agency's headquarters and/or at a local high school, and the costs of LEAP (including two scholarships a year) are paid by GRHC. As an added incentive, ABE students whose skills increase by two grade levels and those who complete the GED are given $300 bonuses. Tutors and teachers for the program are drawn from the local LVA affiliate and the Rochester City School District.

27. **Tina Eason, Ob-Gyn Clinic, Carolinas Medical Center**, PO Box 32861, Charlotte, NC 28232, (704) 355-2192. After attending training seminars on how to write materials for low-literacy patients, a group of nurses, dieticians, and other health care personnel from the out-patient clinics of the Carolinas Medical Center formed an ongoing Patient Education Committee. Its purpose is to rewrite patient materials for use in the clinics and to offer guidance and training to other units of the Medical Center where patient reading levels might be a problem. New and revised materials will be tried out with the patients, then further refined if necessary based on patient feedback. [For information about the training seminars conducted by ReadUp Charlotte, a local literacy provider, contact its Executive Director, Molly Boggis, at 316 East Morehead Street, Charlotte, NC 28202, (704) 377-7153.]

28. **Richard Rioux, Associate Director, Acton & Warm Springs Rehabilitation Centers**, 30500 N. Arrastre Canyon Road, PO Box 25, Acton, CA 93510, (805) 269-0062. The Rehabilitation Centers have been providing treatment for drug and alcohol abuse for over 25 years. Tests of those entering the 90-day residential program, about half of whom are homeless, indicated that some 30 percent read at or below the 7th-grade level. In 1989 the Centers introduced a Language Improvement Program (LIP) for their homeless residents which offers instruction in reading, writing, and math by volunteer tutors (including some residents of the Centers). Within six months the completion rate for the recovery program jumped from 49 percent to 78 percent for residents who participated in LIP as either students or tutors. A follow-up study on residents six months after leaving their recovery program showed that a much higher percentage of those who had been in LIP remained sober, and 65 percent of those who had participated in LIP were in some form of educational program as contrasted to 5 percent of those who had not. The Centers have held conferences to help homeless shelters, correctional facilities, and other rehabilitation centers start literacy programs and have published a *How*

To Manual for the Uses of Literacy Training in Program Recovery from Alcoholism and Drug Addiction (free copy available from the Centers).

29. **Dr. M.G. Stemmermann, Tri-State Literacy Council**, 455 Knight Street Plaza, Huntington, WV 25701, (304) 523-9451. Retired doctor M.G. Stemmermann has been using *Readability Calculations*, a computer program developed by Micro Power and Light Company of Dallas, Texas, to determine the readability levels of health pamphlets from hospitals, volunteer organizations, and social service agencies. In a study of 50 pamphlets (including some written for children), only 20 percent were written at or below the 7th-grade level. According to Dr. Stemmermann, pamphlets above this level will not be read and understood by the majority of Americans, even those having higher-level reading skills.

30. **Jo Ann Weinberger, Executive Director, Center for Literacy**, 636 South 48th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19143-2035, (215) 474-1235. In addition to having run a workplace literacy program at Presbyterian Hospital, CFL (in conjunction with the Health Promotion Council of Southeastern Pennsylvania) has developed an easy-to-read pamphlet on smoking, entitled *How Did You Quit?* CFL and Hahnemann University Hospital also conducted two comparison studies of the readability levels of four major consent forms required for childhood immunizations (old and revised versions from the Center for Disease Control) and the reading levels of 150 low-income parents who use an inner-city pediatric clinic. They found that both versions required a reading level beyond the capability of the vast majority of the parent population and that the revised forms, in fact, required increased reading time.

31. **Eunice Askov, Director, Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy**, 204 Calder Way, Suite 204, University Park, PA 16801-4756, (814) 863-3777. The Institute, a part of the College of Education of Penn State University, has been working in the health and nutrition arenas for a number of years. It assisted the Cooperative Extension Service of the Penn State College of Agriculture in revising its *Eating Right Is Basic 2* curriculum and related materials to improve their readability. In a joint project of the Colleges of Education, Agriculture, and Health and Human Development, Institute staff developed three booklets—*Snacks*, *Fast Food*, and *Shopping*—which provided basic nutritional concepts in an easy-to-read format. The Institute is presently involved in one of the four projects funded by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (see #7 above), which will develop a Cardiovascular Dietary Education System (CARDES). The audio, video, and print-based materials of the CARDES project will target at-risk Black adults reading between the fifth- and eighth-grade level, and will be tested with the clients of a variety of cardiovascular clinics associated with Howard University in Washington, D.C.

32. **Jacqueline Dignum, Circulation Director, Baby on the Way: Basics**, 636 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10011, (212) 989-8181. In 1991 the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)—with funding from Carnation Nutritional Products and the Pew Charitable Trusts, among others—launched a three-year program to publish an annual magazine called *Baby on the Way: Basics*, an easy-to-read publication for expectant mothers with low literacy skills. ACOG teamed up with the editors of *Baby Talk Magazine* (a successful publication after which *Baby on the Way* is modeled) and Literacy Volunteers of America. The role of the editors is to write and produce the magazine, ACOG checks for final accuracy, and LVA ensures that the content and reading level are appropriate for the audience. Among the groups that signed up for the first issue (November 1991) were maternal and child health programs, doctors, literacy providers, adolescent pregnancy programs, and Job Corps programs. Requests for over one million copies were received for the second issue, which came out in November 1992. The third issue is scheduled for release in the fall of 1993. It is hoped that by next year the magazine will become permanently self-sustaining through advertising and other revenues.

33. **Cynthia M. Kratzke, Operation Support Services, Sentara Health System, Norfolk General Hospital**, 600 Gresham Drive, Norfolk, VA 23507, (804) 628-3155. The Sentara Health System is in the process of implementing a "patient-focused" delivery model in its four hospitals in the Tidewater (VA) area. As a part of the restructuring, employees are being cross-trained to work in

teams. Sentara became aware early on that the competency levels of some employees were not high enough for them to participate in the cross-training, and it is now operating skills enhancement programs at all four sites. The adult basic skills classes (which meet twice a week) are taught by instructors from the Norfolk and Hampton Public Schools, and job-related materials are gradually being integrated into the curriculum. Participation is voluntary, and released time is shared 50/50 by employer and student. At one site, Norfolk General Hospital, a one-on-one reading program tutored by hospital volunteers trained in the Laubach method by the Tidewater Literacy Council is also being offered.

References

1. **Literacy in the Workplace: You Can't Afford Not to Care**, a 1990 12-page booklet published by the American Hospital Association, gives guidance to hospital administrators on why and how to develop an employee basic skills program. Single copies are $7 to members and $12 to nonmembers; quantity discounts are available. Postage and handling charges are extra. Contact American Hospital Association, PO Box 92683, Chicago, IL 60675-2683, or to charge orders call (800) 242-2626. Specify item #049739 when ordering.

2. **Teaching & Learning English as a Second Language: Curriculum Development Resources for Nursing Homes** was developed by the Continuing Education Institute and the Chinese American Civic Association. It explains in detail how a workplace ESL program was implemented in one nursing home in Boston and describes the development of an ESL curriculum for two others. Included in the book are sample lesson plans, workbooks, and other curriculum materials. Available for $25, plus $3.82 shipping and handling, from CEI, 35 Highland Circle, Needham, MA 02194, (617) 449-4802.

3. **College Preparation for Health Care Workers**, which grew out of a demonstration project between the City University of New York and the Consortium for Worker Education (NYC), consists of a *Reading & Writing Curriculum Guide* ($57.50), a *Mathematics Curriculum Guide* ($65), and three *Science Lectures* in videocassette format with an accompanying *Viewing Guide* ($60). The curriculum is designed for students who have the reading proficiency required to pass the GED but, with some modifications, it can be used with pre-GED students. The guides, which are intended for use with standard college health care texts, provide lesson plans for the teacher and reproducible worksheets for the student. Reading and writing skills are taught in the contexts of anatomy, physiology, and other sciences basic to the health care professions. The math curriculum contains problems and examples drawn from the workplace. Both guides stress those skills most needed to succeed in college. The science lectures, typical of those encountered in college courses, are designed to build listening, reading, writing and other skills. Each program can be purchased separately, or the complete program is $146. Contact Dolores Perin, Center for Advanced Study in Education, CUNY Graduate School, 25 West 43rd Street, Room 620, New York, NY 10036, (212) 642-2937.

4. **Teaching Patients with Low Literacy Skills**, by Cecilia Doak, Leonard Doak, and Jane Root, is a book aimed at increasing the ability of health-care professionals to help patients with low-literacy levels understand instructions about hospital procedures, medication, and other health-related matters. Available for $17.50 from J.B. Lippincott Co., PO Box 1580, Hagerstown, MD 21741, (800) 638-3030. Specify ISBN #0397544987.

5. **Eat Right to Lower Your High Blood Cholesterol** is a 14-page color brochure, written at a 5th-grade reading level, for patients with high blood cholesterol. The conversational text, presented in large typeface with several illustrations, explains the significance and importance of reducing high blood cholesterol and focuses on food choices and preparation—practical information that patients can apply to their own eating patterns. Charts list foods high and low in saturated fat and cholesterol. A tear-out "shopping list" of heart-healthy foods is provided to help patients when they shop. A similar booklet (28 pages), **Eat Right to Help Lower Your High Blood Pressure**, was released in early 1993. Both booklets were developed by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. Single copies of each are available from the NHLBI Information Center, PO Box 30105, Bethesda, MD 20824-0105, (301) 951-3260. In addition, the booklets are for sale in bulk quantities from the Government Printing Office:

...**High Blood Cholesterol**, #017-043-00121-4, $25 for 40 copies; and ...**High Blood Pressure**, #017-043-00127-3, $24 for 25 copies. Written orders accompanied by checks should be sent to New Orders, Superintendent of Documents, PO Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954. To order by telephone (charge or GPO deposit accounts), call (202) 783-3238. Specify the stock numbers when ordering.

6. **Workplace Literacy: Reshaping the American Workforce** is a 1992 publication of the U.S. Department of Education. The 93-page report reviews the goals and accomplishments of the DOE's National Workplace Literacy Program (NWLP) in its first three years of operation, which included grant awards totaling $41 million to 149 business-education partnerships. (About 13 percent of the grants went to the hospital/health-care industry.) More importantly, it analyzes and assesses what has been learned from the experience, makes recommendations for enhancing workplace program effectiveness, and gives a number of practical suggestions for future NWLP applicants. The publication is designed to disseminate information and help point the way for businesses/industries, labor organizations, and educational institutions that may recognize the need for worker skills upgrading but are unsure of how to proceed. Available without cost from the Clearinghouse of Adult Education and Literacy, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20202-7240, (202) 205-9996.

7. **The Pap Test: It Can Save Your Life**, an October 1991 publication from the National Cancer Institute, is an easy-to-read, four-page pamphlet designed to motivate women to get a Pap test. Three more booklets are scheduled for summer 1993 release: **Have a Pelvic Exam and Pap Test**, which is informational in nature—where to go, what will happen; **Take Care of Your Breasts**, which urges women to have breast exams by their physicians and to do breast self-examinations; and **The Mammogram Could Save Your Life**, which explains what a mammogram is, who should have it, and how it is done. A fifth booklet in the NCI low-literacy series will discuss how patients can take care of themselves while on chemotherapy; it has a tentative release date of fall 1993. Also scheduled for fall release is a set of guidelines for writers and others who are trying to communicate in print with low-literacy audiences. To obtain copies of **The Pap Test: It Can Save Your Life** (free of charge) and/or check on the availability of the other four booklets and guidelines, call NCI's toll-free Cancer Information Service at 800-422-6237.

8. The curriculum materials developed through a partnership between New Mexico State University, the New Mexico Coalition for Literacy, and a local hospital (with U.S. Department of Education funding) are now available as ERIC documents. They include **Step Ahead: A Partnership for Improved Health Care Communication**, an overview of the program and course materials, ED#343022; **Communication for Supervisors**, ED#343023; **Straight Talk**, a basic oral communications course, ED#343024; **Write Stuff**, a basic writing course, ED#343025; and **Effective Presentations**, ED#343026—authored by P. Meyer, S. Bernhardt, C. Dudson Mallory, and P. Laroche. To order, contact Information Plus, Center on Education and Training for Employment, 1960 Kenny Road, Columbus, OH 43210-1090, (800) 848-4815. Specify the ERIC Access #'s shown.

9. ***Health Status of Illiterate Adults: Relationship between Literacy and Health Status among Persons with Low Literacy Skills*** appeared in the May-June 1992 issue (Vol. 5, pp. 257-64) of the Journal of the American Board of Family Practice. It reports the results of a study by Dr. Barry Weiss of about 200 adults in the Pima County (AZ) ABE program. The Journal can be accessed through most major libraries. For a reprint of the article, send a $10 check, payable to the Journal of the American Board of Family Practice, c/o New England Journal of Medicine, 1440 Main Street, Waltham, MA 02154, (617) 893-3800.

10. **ESL for Action: Problem Posing at Work**, by Nina Wallerstein and Elsa Auerbach, takes a problem-solving approach to learning English and thinking skills in workplace and ESL programs. The teacher's guide ($6.50) is applicable in a wide variety of contexts; the student workbook ($12.75) is a workplace-oriented curriculum. The material has a major focus on workplace safety and personal health issues. Available from Addison Wesley, Route 128, Reading, MA 01867, (617) 944-3700.

11. **Taking Care: A Handbook About Women's Health**, by Mary Breen, is an easy-to-read handbook that provides information about health topics of high concern to women—nutrition, stress, depression, exercise, weight control, over-the-counter drugs, doctor-patient relations, sex (including AIDS), birth control, vaginal infections, pap tests, breast examinations, and menopause. The contents were field-tested by residents of shelters for abused women and reviewed by a doctor and other health professionals. Available for $14.95 plus $5 shipping and handling (in Canadian dollars) from Rita Bisram, Marketing Assistant, , Consumer & Professional Books Division, McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 300 Water Street, Whitby, Ontario LIN9B6, (416) 430-5040.

12. **Workforce 2000: Work and Workers for the 21st Century** was prepared by the Hudson Institute for the U.S. Department of Labor and published in June 1987. This groundbreaking report has already had a powerful impact on national understanding of the workforce and workplace illiteracy problem. It was the first serious and comprehensive effort to analyze current and future workforce literacy and education retraining needs in the context of national demographic, economic, and social trends. Among other things it confirms that even though health care jobs will increase during the next decade or so, the pool of available workers will significantly lack the basic skills required for those jobs. The full report is available for $4.25 from the Superintendent of Documents, PO Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954. To order by telephone (charge or GPO deposit accounts), call (202) 783-3238. Specify Stock #029-014-00240-2.

13. Albany Educational Television has produced a valuable new video program: **HIV Education for Adult Literacy Programs** ($85 plus $4 shipping and handling). The video is a staff development program for instructors, administrators, and other personnel involved in adult learning. It is designed to help providers develop the awareness and sensitivity needed to instruct learners about this extremely difficult subject and to help instructors design their own HIV curriculums. The program is made up of three components: A 22-minute videocassette, *Providing a Supportive and Sensitive Environment*, contains interviews with HIV-infected people and a social worker with broad experience in working with this population. *The Guide for Teachers* contains background information about HIV and AIDS and includes sample lessons and activities. *Where to Start* gives an overview of the materials and instructions for implementing an HIV education program. It also contains an extensive list of resources. Available from the City School District of Albany, Albany Educational TV, 27 Western Avenue, Albany, NY 12203, (518) 465-4741. (Make checks payable to City School District of Albany.)

14. **Do You Understand: Communicating with the Non-English Speaking Patient** is a handbook ($15) and trainer's guide ($6.50) developed by Literacy Volunteers of America for use in learning to communicate with foreign-born, limited ESL patients. Available from Literacy Volunteers of America, 5795 Widewaters Parkway, Syracuse, NY 13214, (315) 445-8000. Specify stock #91011 (handbook) and #91012 (trainer's guide).

15. ***Cultural Diversity***, a three-page article by Susan Pristic, appeared in the August 1991 issue (Vol. 14, No. 8) of Contemporary Long Term Care Magazine. It discusses how a number of long-term care facilities are trying to shape their culturally diverse workforces into cohesive units by, among other things, addressing their ESL and basic skills needs. The back issue is available for $5 from Bill Communications, P.O. Box 3599, Akron, OH 44309-3599, (216) 867-4401, ext. 57.

16. **Just Say It: How To Write for Readers Who Don't Read Well** is a training manual for writers who want to improve their ability to communicate with low-level readers. The manual grew out of plain language projects conducted by Push Literacy Action Now (PLAN), a literacy provider in the Washington, D.C. area. Its core is a series of activities in which users analyze written materials, many drawn from the health-care field, and then rewrite them in a form that will be accessible to low-level readers. It also contains general information about the problem of adult illiteracy, a case study describing the process through which PLAN revised the Washington, D.C. voter registration form, and model plan language materials. The manual may be useful to individuals or in group settings. Single copies are $49.50 (plus $3.50 postage and

handling). The price for orders of five or more is $44.95 each. Order from PLAN, Inc., 1332 G Street SE, Washington, DC 20003, (202) 547-8903.

17. The Channing L. Bete Company, 200 State Road, South Deerfield, MA 01373, (800) 628-7733, publishes simply-illustrated and simply-written materials which give health care and related information to adults with limited literacy skills.

[Note: For additional References, see the Contacts Section, items #20, 22, 28, 31, and 32.]